

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KATHMA 02896 070219Z

14

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01

/051 W

----- 032285

R 061040Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5572

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

UFHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 149

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 2896

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: SNAR, NP

SUBJ: VISIT OF UN NARCOTICS OFFICIALS

1. A TEAM OF OFFICIALS, LED BY MR. DITTERT, FROM THE UN FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL (UNFDAC) VISITED NEPAL FROM JUNE 30 TO JULY 6 AT THE INVITATION OF THE SECRETARY FOR INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, DEVENDRA RAJ UPADHYAYA. DITTERT MET WITH EMBASSY OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE VISIT.

2. DITTERT SAID THAT THE TEAM WAS IN GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT NEPALESE ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE DRUG PROBLEM HAD IMPROVED IN RECENT YEARS. HE NOTED THAT THE VERY FACT THAT THE UNFDAC HAD BEEN INVITED TO COME WAS BUT ONE INDICATION THAT SOME OFFICIALS, AT LEAST, REALIZED THAT STEPS MUST BE TAKEN TO STEM THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS, CHIEFLY HASISH, FROM THE COUNTRY.

3. DITTERT SAID THAT IT NOW APPEARED THAT THE UN DRAFTED LEGISLATION AIMED AT NARCOTICS CONTROL WAS  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KATHMA 02896 070219Z

BEING HELD UNDER TIGHT WRAPS IN THE MIN OF FINANCE.

HE COULD GIVE NO EXPLANATION WHY THE DRAFT WAS BEING KEPT SECRET, ALTHOUGH HE HAZARDED THE GUESS THAT THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT WANT OPPOSITION TO BUILD UP AGAINST THE BILL IN ADVANCE. HE ALSO ADMITTED THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE BILL WAS SO FULL OF LOOPHOLES THAT HMG OFFICIALS DID NOT WANT TO REVEAL IT TO UN OFFICIALS. HE DOUBTED THAT THE DRAFT WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE LEGISLATURE IN THE NEAR FUTURE, OR AT LEAST NOT UNTIL SERIOUS STUDY HAD BEEN GIVEN TO THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES FOR THE FARMERS IN THE HILL REGIONS WHO RELY ON HASISH CULTIVATION AS A MONEY CROP.

4. THE UNFDAC OFFICIALS, ENCOURAGED BY THEIR DISCUSSIONS, APPEAR WILLING TO RECOMMEND SOME SORT OF UN PROGRAM FOR NEPAL, IF ONLY TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT MOMENTUM AND TO STRESS THE CONTINUING INTERNATIONAL CONCERN OVER CANNABIS EMANATING FROM NEPAL. THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION REQUESTED THE FUND'S ASSISTANCE IN LAUNCHING A MULTI-DISCIPLINE STUDY OF LAND USE AND CULTIVATION PRACTICES IN WESTERN HILLS. SUCH A STUDY WOULD DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF CANNABIS PRODUCTION, TRAFFIC PATTERNS, AND WOULD ALSO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR ALTERNATIVE CROPS AND THE ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS A TOTAL BAN ON CULTIVATION MIGHT BRING TO THE AREA. DITTERT FELT THAT SUCH STUDY WOULD PROVE USEFUL AND IS PREPARED TO RECOMMEND IT TO THE FUND.

5. DURING HIS VISIT DITTERT STRESSED THE NEED FOR INCREASED PENALTIES ON SMUGGLERS, SINCE THE PRESENT LAW ACTS AS LITTLE OR NO DETERRENT TO TRAFFICKING. HE ALSO IS NOW APPEARING IN THE KATHMANDU AREA FROM THAILAND, AS WELL AS OVER THE REPORT THAT OPIUM POPPIES ARE UNDER CULTIVATION.

6. COMMENT: THE UNFDAC TEAM IS WELL AWARE OF THE EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN ILLICIT TRAFFICKING, BUT WE SHARE THEIR VIEW THAT A CONTINUING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE TO REDUCE SMUGGLING IS IMPORTANT. A UN STUDY OF THE WESTERN HILLS WOULD APPEAR TO US TO BE USEFUL ADJUNCT TO OUR OWN EFFORTS AIMED AT IMPROVING ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES AND COULD

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KATHMA 02896 070219Z

PROVE TO BE A NECESSITY IF NARCOTICS LEGISLATION IS EVER TO BE ENACTED IN THE COUNTRY. AT VERY LEAST IT WOULD BRING HOME TO CONCERNED OFFICIALS THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM IN NEPAL. WE WOULD HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT THE FUND WILL ENDORSE THE TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS AND THAT A STUDY EFFORT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED AS EARLY AS OCTOBER 1976.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DRUG CONTROL, VISITS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 06 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** saccheem  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976KATHMA02896  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Line Count:** 115  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION IO  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** saccheem  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 MAY 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 MAY 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2004 by saccheem>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** VISIT OF UN NARCOTICS OFFICIALS  
**TAGS:** SNAR, NP  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006